



DATE: February 24, 2016

AGENDA ITEM # 3

TO: Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Commission
FROM: Cedric Novenario, Staff Liaison
SUBJECT: Downtown Bicycle Parking in the Public Right-of-Way

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Recommend the Chair and Vice-Chair work with the staff liaison to develop a questionnaire/survey to obtain feedback regarding bicycle parking in the public right-of-way
2. Provide direction regarding potential locations for the winners of the Artistic Bicycle Rack Competition

BACKGROUND

Anecdotally, it appears that the number of bicycles riding to and through downtown Los Altos has been steadily increasing over the past year or two. The number and placement of racks in the public right-of-way for bicycle parking is limited and may be inadequate for the number of bicycles observed during peak hours (e.g., mid-day, and on weekends). The Downtown Parking Management Plan identifies locations suggested for placing additional (new) bicycle parking in the public right-of-way. Those locations were identified prior to completion of new commercial developments in the downtown area, and additional buildings that may bring additional ridership to the area are under construction now. Although the new developments do or will have bicycle parking, the existing influx of bicyclists, coupled with the potential increase associated with bicyclists visiting establishments in the new buildings, will continue to place pressure on bicycle parking downtown.

To address the need for additional bicycle parking, the Downtown Parking Management Plan should be reviewed to determine if the identified locations in the public right-of-way still meet the current and projected needs of bicyclists. Analysis should include location, numbers of bicycles handled, and type of parking, is requested from BPAC. Consideration should be given as well to “non-standard” bicycle parking, such as with parklets (either temporary or permanent).

As part of the review and generation of recommendations, it may be useful to seek public input. For example, observations and recommendations from business owners may be helpful. Some businesses are impacted by bicycles being leaned against bushes or walls

proximate to their entrances; some businesses have become gathering or rest stops for bicyclists, who then become revenue-generators for the businesses. Each of these types of experiences, and others, could be useful for making informed decisions about bicycle parking.

On September 24, 2014, the BPAC recommended to include on the 2015 work plan an analysis of the recommended bicycle parking locations in the public right-of-way identified in the Downtown Parking Management Plan. It was also recommended to develop a public outreach strategy to obtain feedback regarding bicycle parking in the public right-of-way.

The BPAC and staff unfortunately were not able to address this work in 2015 and will carry it to the 2016 work plan.

DISCUSSION

Recommending the Chair and Vice-Chair work with staff to develop a questionnaire/survey avoids the need for the BPAC to form a sub-committee, and allows greater flexibility for meetings and questionnaire/survey development. A draft questionnaire/survey will be presented to the BPAC for review and approval in March/April 2016. In general, the questionnaire/survey will request information from downtown business/property owners relating to bike usage from their employees/customers. For example, if the existing bike racks and locations are adequate for their needs, are the existing bike rack locations improperly placed?;, if new locations are needed-where?;, etc.

Questionnaire/Survey Outcome will be used

The information obtained from the questionnaire/survey will be compared against what is recommended in the Downtown Parking Management Plan, relevant bike parking discussions with the Downtown Parking Committee, relevant recommendations from the Climate Action Plan, and the Artistic Bike Rack Policy. The BPAC and staff will evaluate any discrepancies between the questionnaire/survey data and above plans, committees and policies, and will develop recommendations based on the questionnaire/survey data.

Artistic Bike Racks

At the February 3, 2016 special meeting, staff presented information related to the Artistic Bike Rack Competition. It is estimated that at least four artistic bike racks will be selected. It was originally intended for the selected racks to replace in kind, the existing U-shaped bike rack locations in downtown. However, the Public Arts Commission (PAC) has also expressed a desire to add new locations for the artistic bike racks. Staff seeks direction from the BPAC addressing the PAC's desire for new bike rack locations. One suggestion is to hold a joint-meeting with the PAC to discuss potential artistic bike rack locations.

Attachment

Downtown Parking Management Plan-Bicycle Parking Related Sections